Conversion of agricultural land for commercial activities

*393. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the large scale conversion of agricultural land to set up business Centres, Malls, amusement parks, etc., affecting the food production in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that in most of such deals, the peasants are paid less than the market value of the land; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) & (b) above be in the affirmative, the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. There is a marginal decline in agricultural land from 184.29 million hectare in 1999-2000 to 183.40 million hectare in 2003-04. During the same period, land under non-agricultural use has increased from 23.47 million hectare to 24.49 million hectare. In the case of compulsory acquisition of land under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, the farmers whose land is acquired are paid compensation taking into consideration, *inter alia*, the market value of the land at the date of publication of notification under Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, alongwith solatium of 30% on such market value and interest @ 12% per annum for the period between the date of notification under Section 4 of the Act and the date of award of the Collector or taking possession of land, whichever is earlier. The details of price paid to farmers for purchase of their agricultural land by private parties for non-agricultural purposes are not available.

Land is a State subject. The role of the Central Government in this field is advisory and coordinating. However, legislative provisions restricting conversion of agricultural land for non agricultural purposes exist in most of the States.

Setting up of Human Trafficking Control Boards in States

394. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state: